

THE
EVANGELIST;

Being

A COLLECTION OF PAPERS,

DOCTRINAL, EXPERIMENTAL,

AND

PRACTICAL.

PRINCIPALLY ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS.

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Unhappy New Year

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THE EVANGELIST.

VOL. II.

JANUARY, 1825.

[No. 1.]

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

NEW YEAR'S SERMON.

HAGGAI, 1st Ch. 7th Verse.

"Thus saith the Lord of Hosts—consider your ways."

It is not material to our present purpose to inquire, minutely, into the circumstances, under which, the Lord commanded his prophet to deliver this solemn charge to the people. It may merely be remarked, that the occasion of it was their neglect to rebuild the temple, their vain excuses for this neglect, and their disregard of God's dealings with them on account of it. They were living in ease, luxury, and carelessness in Zion; regardless of the commands, and forgetful of the honour of Jehovah; suffering their holy and beautiful house, where their fathers worshipped, to lie waste, and taking no account of their daily accumulating and aggravated sins. But God, who is rich in mercy, was unwilling that his covenant people should go on headlong in their trespasses, with none to remind them of their duty, or warn them of their danger. He charged the prophet, therefore, to go and proclaim in their ears, "*Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, consider your ways. Examine into your state, search your hearts and try your ways; observe my dealings with you, and turn unto me, that I may have mercy upon you.*"

But, my hearers, is not the duty imposed by the text, of general application; and may I not, at this time, with propriety, address to you, individually, its solemn language? "*Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, consider your ways.*" Certainly, the obligation of this injunction is not confined to the people of any particular age or nation: it rests alike upon all men; in every stage, and in every condition of life. Is the state of our souls, and of our accounts with God, of less importance than the state of our properties and of our accounts with our fellow men? But what is thought of the man who disregards these?—What would be thought of the merchant who prosecuted an extensive business, made large purchases and effected large sales, but kept no books, took no securities, made no settlements, and never stopped to inquire how he stood, either with creditors or debtors? Could you not decide, with absolute certainty, concerning such an individual, that he was on the high road to bankruptcy and ruin? The same issue would follow similar neglect in every other branch of business. Let the

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mariner, in a dangerous sea, sail on, from day to day, and keep no reckoning; make no soundings and take no observations, and what would become of vessel and cargo? Every one sees that no one but a madman would conduct thus. But are indifference and heedlessness in spiritual things, less fatal; and are watchfulness and care less important? Every individual has an account daily and hourly running with his Maker. Every thought, word and deed, are entered in the book of God's remembrance, and a final settlement will one day have to be made. The manner, in which this account is to be rendered, and the terms upon which it must be adjusted, are published and well known; and no man's or angel's tongue can describe the dreadful consequences of thoughtlessness and inattention to this grand concern of life. We are all embarked on a perilous ocean: whirlpools and rocks and quicksands are on every side; and yet our voyage is for eternity. We have but two alternatives before us. If we sink, we sink *forever*; and if we gain the haven of peace and rest, that peace is boundless, and that rest eternal. No reasonable man, then, can doubt the infinite importance of being sober-minded, scrutinizing and vigilant in the momentous concerns of the soul.

But if such be, *at all times*, our most urgent duty, yet there are seasons in which we are naturally led, as well as solemnly called to its discharge. The commencement of a *New Year*, is such a season. It strikes us like a pause, in nature. It is a period in the march of time that arrests attention; and it is, unquestionably, fitted to excite reflection, if not devotion. Who can help thinking of God's sparing mercy, during the year that is past? Many have fallen on our right hand, and many on our left. The grave has swallowed up thousands in our land, multitudes in our state, and numbers in the midst of us; but we are left. Justice called for *our* sacrifice; but mercy cried forbear; and mercy's plea is yet heard in heaven in our behalf. Many, too, have been sorely afflicted; have lost near and dear friends. Others have been visited with personal sickness; have had wearisome days and nights appointed unto them. Many have been stripped of all their earthly possessions, by misfortunes in business, by fire, or by shipwreck; and have been turned naked on the world. Multitudes have been sighing in the chains of slavery, or smarting under the rod of governmental oppression. Some have been wading through seas of blood to maintain, and others to achieve their liberties. We, on the contrary, through the kind providence of God, have been exempted from most or all of these evils: And are we not, at this season, loudly called upon to reflect upon God's gracious dealings with us? ask why he has, in these respects, made us to differ from others—inquire how we have requited his kindness, and whether his goodness has led us to repentance? Nor have any of us who may have been afflicted during the past year, the less reason to be affected with the divine dispensations towards us—to inquire wherefore our afflictions were sent, and how we have behaved under them; whether they have led us nearer to God, or driven us farther from him; whether we have kissed the rod and justified him that appointed it; or whether, in the spirit of angry rebellion, we have spurned at both.

I am confident that we are naturally inclined, at this season, to revert to the past; but our minds will doubtless dwell on those things that interest us most. If the world be our God, and our homage be all paid

in its idol temple ; if we be stretching our anxious desires abroad and ask who will show us any earthly good ; if the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life have supreme control over our hearts ; then it is easy to see to what points our meditations will be directed. Each one will look back on the transactions of the year that is gone by, to see what mistakes he may have made in his secular business. Every man will endeavour to gather wisdom from past experience ; will consider well his past errors, strive to shun them, in future, and resolve to commence the new year, by pursuing his favorite object with fresh ardour and redoubled exertions. It is common for those who are wise in the concerns of the world, to employ this season in examining into the state of their business, ascertaining their loss or gain, adjusting outstanding accounts and laying new plans of future enterprise.

Now let me ask my hearers, should not the same wise economy that governs you in your temporal concerns, watch, also, over your spiritual interests ? Is this interesting period chosen to set every thing right between you and your fellow men ; and is every thing to be left unsettled between you and your God ? Are there not long arrears against you in his book ; and has not a settlement been long—*too long deferred* ? Has such a settlement, in fact, ever been made ? *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, consider your ways.* The message comes to you and to me—to every man that has a soul to save or lose—a heaven to gain and a hell to shun.

If the foregoing remarks be just, the duty enjoined in the text will appear to be one of the highest conceivable importance. I shall now, therefore, proceed to lay before you some reasons why you should enter upon it without delay.

1. That we ought immediately to attend to this duty *because God is calling us to do so.* I am aware, that to speak of the command of God, as a motive for attending to any particular duty, is, by many, treated as a very *light thing*. It is a motive which never bears with the weight of a feather upon their minds. A motive which does not touch their hopes or their fears, touches not their hearts, and affects not their lives. But I hope the will of God is received by some as the *supreme law*. I hope there are some who love his commands and affectionately reverence his authority. With such, will it not be enough to know that the duty of trying our ways, is enforced by *thus saith the Lord of Hosts*. But who is there that can resist this motive, when he considers that it is the language of Divine love ; of love to our best interests—the interests of our souls. The Lord our Redeemer knows our wants, our sins, and our dangers, infinitely better than we do ; and he loves our souls infinitely more. He sees how thoughtless and careless we are ; how wise we are in temporal and how unwise in spiritual things ; how vigilantly we watch over our accounts with our fellow men, and how little we regard our final account with Him. Therefore he comes to us in the language of authority softened by compassion with “ *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, consider your ways.*”

2. We ought to arouse ourselves to this duty, *because we may discover in our hearts a proneness to neglect it.* Here lies our danger and we see it. When men have any important temporal concern to attend to, involving exertion or self denial ; and perceive in themselves a disposition to *procrastinate*, they become alarmed, and

arouse themselves to the work. They see that the indulgence of such spirit, in so important a business, threatens ruin ; and that delay only makes the case worse. Here is a man, for example, who has suffered his accounts with his merchant to run for years, without examination or settlement. He has been full of other cares, and has been burdened with other expenses ; and though he has made some payments, he knows that his debts have been much larger than his credits. He begins to dread an adjustment, both because it will be tedious and because he will have to provide for the payment of the balance which may be found against him. Now what would worldly wisdom teach in such a case ? would not its language be—give no place to sloth or to procrastination ; if the case be bad to-day, it will be worse to-morrow : rouse thyself to the duty—delay is ruin. “ Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him, lest he deliver thee to the judge ; and the judge deliver thee to the officer ; and thou be cast into prison : ” And would not the man who was wise take such advice ? and if he refused to listen to these admonitions, and gave himself up to carelessness, giddiness and dissipation, would he not soon find his estate wasted and his family involved in wretchedness and want ? Now, my hearers, apply this comparison to spiritual things. You have had a moral account with your God that has been accumulating many years. You are conscious, perhaps, that large arrears of sin and guilt are charged in the book of his remembrance against you. You dread a final settlement ; and you dread a present examination. You know your case is *bad*, but you are unwilling to know *how bad* : Conscience gives you much trouble and pain now ; and your fear if the whole truth is known it will give you much more, and destroy all your remaining peace. I told you in the other case, what worldly wisdom would teach ; heavenly wisdom holds the same language in this. The spirit of procrastination is as fatal in the one instance as in the other.—And if this spirit be strong to day, it will be stronger to-morrow. The state of the account is daily growing worse, and the indisposition to investigate it, is daily increasing. How then will the man act who is as wise for his *soul* as he is for his *body* ; as wise for eternity as he is for time ? Perceiving his awful danger ; doubly alarming from his disposition to sleep over it, will he not rouse himself by a mighty effort, will he not shake from his soul the spirit of sloth and indifference, and determine to know the worst of his case ? Will he not arise and call upon his God, if, peradventure, he may have mercy upon him that he perish not in his thoughtlessness and guilt ? What if he find himself a great sinner, as doubtless he will ? his chief difficulty lies not in the greatness of his sins, for the blood of Christ applied by faith cleanseth from all sin ; but his danger lies in his unwillingness to *know*, to *feel*, and to *confess* how great a sinner he is in his obstinate unbelief, and rejection of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

3. And this leads me to notice a third reason why we should hearken to the injunction of the text, and *consider our ways*,—and that is, because *no man will turn to God till he does this*.

Rest assured, my hearers, no person was ever recovered from the snares of the adversary, and from the broad road to eternal death, until he had first come to himself, and well considered his past ways of sin and guilt. And I may add, further, that no Christian having de-

clined from the path of duty and backslidden from this Saviour, ever turned his feet again into the pathway of the Divine testimonies, or ever again enjoyed his presence, without previously considering his ways, and humbling himself before God, on account of them.

The very first fruit of real love to God, is tears of penitential sorrows for the breach of his holy laws : But how shall a man *know*, and *feel* how grievously he has broken these laws, till he searches his heart, and life—till he *tries his ways* ? Did the wandering prodigal take a single step towards his father's house till he had thus come to himself ? Were not the symptoms of returning wisdom first discoverable in his reflections on the folly and guilt of his past conduct ? There was a time when he would not reflect. Sin had filled his heart with madness. He had received the portion of goods that belonged to him, and he was determined to spend it on his lusts, and to live as the fool liveth, regardless of consequences. But poverty and want at length, brought him to himself ; and when he thought on his ways, he was ashamed, astonished, *humbled* ; and then it was that he resolved on an immediate return to his father ; taking with him, as every penitent sinner must do, the words of contrition and humiliation. The case of the prodigal, is the case of every wanderer from God. Enlightened and unbiassed reason no more approves of a course of iniquity, than does real religion. She, continually, lifts up her voice against it ; but the lusts of the heart control the life. Reason is charged to stand by and to hold her peace, while sin spreads before the soul her charms, eloquently expatiates on her joys, and satan sets his seal to the lie, and finishes the murderous work. But the Spirit of God can break this charm, can expose these works of darkness, and deliver from this fatal snare.

When he comes to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of the judgment to come, he causes the soul to look back on her ways—to possess the iniquities of her youth, as well as those of riper years ; and to cry *unclean unclean*. She sees how the leprosy of sin hath spread defilement in every part, and anxiously asks what fountain of cleansing, the mercy of God hath set open, in which she may wash away her guilt. This is the way and the only way of return to God. Thus saith *the Lord of Hosts consider thy ways*.

But who should consider their ways ? I have told you my hearers—*all men*. Every individual is urgently called to this duty. Persons of all ages, ranks and conditions are called to attend to it. Our text comes home to every man's conscience and bosom.

1st. It addresses the youth with *Thus saith the Lord consider your ways*. You are peculiarly exposed my young friends, to trust in and become the victims of deceitful promises and treacherous hopes. This has always been the besetting folly and the threatening danger of youth and health. These precious endowments which, were it not for the sinfulness of your hearts, would fill you with gratitude to God, by leading you to reflect on his goodness, now make you thoughtless and inconsiderate. You will not *think on your ways*, lest such thoughts should interfere with your worldly pursuits and pleasures. You reason in your hearts, and say there is time enough yet. It is not likely we shall be found among the victims of early disease and death. Having escaped in former years, you think there is every probability in your favor this year also ; But oh ! my youthful hearers beware—be-

ware of such devices of satan and your own evil hearts. Did not all who began the past year with you, but who are now gone to the land of silence and who have had all their accounts closed for the *final tribunal*, indulge in just such reasonings, and vain imaginations. In a case of such amazing importance, your inquiry should not be, is there a probability that I may live another year, or another month, or even another day. The wise enquiry is, is there a *possibility that I may die*; and if there be, what in such an event will be my state? Many have died young; and many such have died unprepared; have been hurried away suddenly in the midst of their mirth and thoughtlessness and sin. Will you not be admonished by their example? Will you walk in their road, regardless of their end? God knows your temptations; and he sees your danger. He lifts up his gracious, his warning voice. He bids you remember *now*, your Creator in the days of your youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when you shall say I have no pleasure in them. Do not turn a deaf ear to this voice of heavenly wisdom; if you do, I fear your folly will be seen too late. It will certainly fill your soul with future regrets. It may plant thorns in your dying pillow and even this may be but the beginning of your sorrows; Commence this new year then *by solemnly considering your ways*, and resolving to turn to the Lord. Again

2. Our subject appeals to the *middle aged*. You are now in the meridian of life. God has spared you beyond most of those who began life with you. Look back and inquire after those who in your earliest years, joined you in the sports of childhood—ask for those who were once the companions of your youth. Are not very many of them in their graves? Do you not already appear to yourselves as monuments of *sparing mercy*? If you had been cut off, as others have, what would now have been your condition? has your youth been spent in the service of God? Did you live under a daily sense of *his presence*? Did you reverence his name? Did you hallow his sabbaths? Did you read and meditate on his word; and pour out your hearts to him in penitence and prayer? If not, you was not prepared to die; and it is of the Lord's mercies that you was not cut off in your sins. And are you better prepared now? If you are wise in your temporal concerns, you often examine into the state of your accounts with your fellow men. How stands your account with God? Your case is full of peril, if you are yet without an interest in the Saviour. Your worldly occupations and anxieties press upon you, and the adversary tells you that you have no time to spare to religion. Your hearts echo the same language. You come on the sabbath to the house of God; and I hope you come *regularly*; but alas! do not the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things follow you even into the sanctuary of the Most High? Do they not choke the word and render it unfruitful? Do you find yourselves inclined to distrust the world, and look forward to a better state? Your experience and observation ought, in this respect, to have made you wise; but has it done so? Do you not rather find the world daily strengthening its hold on your hearts? and if this be so, do you not see your state to be a state full of danger? Where will this growing love of the world and this increase of its cares land you? I tremble for your souls my hearers those of you who fall within this class. I speak from experience, when I admonish you of your danger from the pressure of worldly occupations, and

thoughts, and anxieties. They choke the mind, they steal away the heart from God and religion—from death and the realities of a future world. What, then, you may ask are we to quit the world altogether? No—you are to do your duties in it; but you are also to guard against its snares. You are to remember continually, that it is not your resting place, or your home; and never can be a satisfying portion. While you live in the world, you must learn to live above the world. Take this for your motto—what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Make God your portion, and this will wean you from all other portions. The true secret of living as we ought, it is to live *by faith*: for of this grace, an apostle testifies that it worketh by love, and purifieth the heart and *overcometh the world*: and that which will effect this, is the very thing that we all want. It will enable us to *live well and die well*; and it will be well with us forever. Give yourselves no rest, then, my hearers till you obtain this faith. The bible tells you how it is to be obtained and if you live and die without it, the blood of your souls will be found in your own skirts.

3. Again our subject addresses itself with peculiar force to *the aged*—to all who begin to feel the weight of years—the symptoms of decline. Let me, my fathers and friends, respectfully address you. You have ascended the summit of life, and looked out upon its fairest prospects. You have passed through its gayest and most pleasing scenes—you have tried its pleasures, and you know what they are worth. The wise man calls it a *vain life*, though no man knew better what was the real value of its earthly enjoyments. He found these unsatisfactory. Is not your experience the same? You are now descending into the vale of years: hoary hairs are thickening on your heads, and your strength and vigour are gradually declining. You have seen and rejoiced in a meridian sun, but now the shadows of the evening are gathering about you. Should your lives be spared a few days longer, you can have little enjoyment of the world; for “the grasshopper will soon become a burden, and desire will fail.” It seems as though nothing could be better fitted than your present state, (specially after the sparing mercy of the past year,) to awaken serious consideration. Suffer me to inquire whether you find yourselves more inclined than formerly to this duty. You, doubtless, used, when young and thoughtless, to imagine that your present time of life was the best to attend to religion. The world would then have ceased to charm: its pleasures would then have begun to pall upon the sense—a competency, you hoped, would then have been laid up, and there would be nothing to interfere with your preparation for another world. Such an experiment was very presumptuous and full of hazard; but God has spared you to try it. Is the result as you then anticipated? Has your hold on the world been, latterly, growing weaker? Do you find your affections dwelling on it less? Are your thoughts more on another and better life? Do you find it easier to live a life of prayer and holy obedience? If not, you must, doubtless, see cause for alarm at your state, and feel constrained to warn those who are younger not to put off religion, and serious consideration of their ways, under any fallacious expectation of a *more convenient season*.

My earnest desire and prayer to God is, that he would be your stay and your staff; that he would sustain you under increasing infir-

mities ; enable you to look back on your past life, and well consider all your ways ; that your feet may be turned into the pathway of his testimonies. Those who are younger, will, naturally, look to you for examples. If you should neglect to consider your ways, yet remember that the eyes of the rising generation will be fastened upon them ; and if they are not *right ways*, not only yourselves, but many others with you, will stumble and fall therein—*never to rise again*.

My hearers, the voice of providence, as well as the voice of reason and the word of God, sounds this day in your ears—*Consider thy ways*. How rapid is the flight of time. If you would rightly measure it, look backward and not forward. A prospective view is every way deceitful. To-morrow is not *our own*. Why, then, should we so confidently calculate upon it ; and why does the year, upon which we have, now, through the mercy of God, been permitted to enter, appear so long ? The past year seems to have been, as it were, but a moment. All our past years appear like a shadow : or, as the bible forcibly represents it, *like a tale that is told*. There is, assuredly, some deception in our views of the future. It is but a point of time. The feet of them that have carried our fathers to the narrow house, are at the door, to carry out us, also. The youth, the middle aged, the aged, husbands and wives, parents and children, ministers and people, will soon be gone to their solemn account. All shall be laid in their graves ; the clods of the valley shall cover them, and their spirits shall return to the God who gave them, to await the decisions of the last great day. My hearers, as you love your souls, your *undying souls*, keep these solemn thoughts in your mind—make them familiar. Time is broken by various divisions : There are days and months and years ; there are winter and summer, seed time and harvest ; but soon, O how soon, these will be, by us, known no more. We shall enter on a day whose sun never sets, or sink into a night whose darkness no light will ever dissipate ;—on a state, where he who is filthy will be filthy still, and he who is holy will be holy still. Beyond all reasonable doubt, numbers of us here to-day, will never see another new year's Sabbath. But who are they—who ? Let no one foolishly say, or think, I am not of the number. Rather raise a prayer—Lord, is it I ? It may be you, it may be me. The bow may be bent, the arrow may be on the string. Let neither of us then delay a moment. Let us call upon God in an accepted time and in a day of salvation. *Thus saith the Lord, consider your ways : He that hath an ear to hear let him hear.*

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

EXPOSITION OF 2. COR. 2, 14, 15.

For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one, we are a savor of death unto death ; and to the other, the savor of life unto life.

This declaration was originally made with reference to the apostles of our Lord. And it respects them merely as ministers of the gospel.

It must, therefore, be evidently applicable to all others, who possess that character, and faithfully discharge the duties of that office. The reason why they were unto God a sweet savor in Christ, was because they plainly and faithfully preached and enforced the doctrines and precepts of Christ. And all other ministers of the gospel, who, like them, plainly and faithfully preach and enforce these doctrines and precepts, may, with equal justice, adopt the same language. Holding the same office, and engaged in the same work, they may say, with the same propriety, We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. The apostles, by preaching and enforcing the doctrines and precepts of Christ, made a full and complete exhibition, of the whole system of revealed truth. They neither kept back, nor disguised any part of the revealed counsel of God. They never made it a question, concerning any thing they desired to preach, whether men would *hear*, or whether they would *forbear*; the question was, whether *God had spoken it*. And if they were satisfied God had spoken it, they were at once resolved to preach it, be the consequences what they might. Pursuing this bold, faithful and independent course, the consequence was just what might be expected. Their hearers were all interested, and all affected; though in very different ways. Some were pleased, and some were displeased. Some liked their preaching, and some disliked it. Some believed and embraced it, and some contradicted and blasphemed it. To some, it was the wisdom of God and the power of God; and to some, it was foolishness and a stumbling-block. To some it was a savor of life unto life; and to some, it was a savor of death unto death. This was the effect which the preaching of the apostles produced, and the same effect will be produced, by the preaching of other ministers, provided they preach as the apostles did. This is all plain. It is plain from the scriptures, that this effect *was* produced by all inspired preachers. Several instances are recorded, in which this effect was produced, by the preaching of prophets. We have several instances of the same thing, in the preaching of Christ. And from the general account which we have of the apostle's preaching, as well as from our text, and a number of similar passages, it is very plain, that it always, in a greater or less degree, produced the same effect. And experience, and daily observation, concurring with scripture-testimony, plainly prove the same thing of ministers now, who preach the gospel with apostolic plainness and fidelity. To some, their preaching is Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God; and to some, it is a stumbling-block and foolishness. To some, it is a savor of life unto life; and to some, it is a savor of death unto death.

The *manner*, in which it produces these effects, is, also plain.

It is a savor of life unto life, in this manner. The sinner hears the faithful minister preach. This minister, after the example of Christ and his apostles, preaches that mankind are all guilty; that they are sinners before the Lord exceedingly; that they are dead in trespasses and sins; that they are already under condemnation; that the love of God is not in them; and that without holiness no man shall see the Lord; that except they repent, they must perish; that unless they believe, they must be damned; that except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. The sinner to whom the word is to become a savor of life unto life, hears these solemn and alarming

truths with candour. Instead of rashly rejecting them, he carefully searches the Scriptures, to see whether they are so. He there finds them all fully and clearly substantiated. In this state, he immediately discovers, that his own situation is exceedingly dangerous and alarming. He is immediately filled with deep solicitude and anxiety, for his future safety.

The faithful minister, also preaches, that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life; that Jesus Christ was set forth to be a propitiation for sin, through faith in his blood, that God might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth. The sinner hears these things, and again goes to the Scriptures to see whether they are so; and to his inexpressible joy, finds it even so; that it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ died to save sinners, of whom he considers himself as chief. In this way, the word preached is made, by the grace of God, the means of his conviction and conversion. Nor is this all. His future sanctification, and growth in grace are promoted by the same means. He is sanctified by the word of God which is truth. In the same way, also, is he kept from those delusive errors, which abound in the work, until he arrives to the stature of the fulness of a perfect man in Christ Jesus. Thus, the word preached to him, is a savor of life unto life.

But, to others, the same preaching becomes a savor of death unto death. The sinner, on whom the word is about to produce this awful effect, hears the faithful minister preach, that mankind are all guilty, already condemned, and must be born again, or they cannot see the kingdom of God. But when he hears such preaching, he is impatient and uneasy. He has not enough candour to go and search the scriptures, to see whether these things are so. But, without duly examining the subject, he rashly resolves, that he will never believe such doctrines. Indeed, he feels a degree of indignation at the idea of being in a state, either so guilty, so helpless, or so dangerous as the preacher describes. Thus he will not come to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. Being in this state of mind, willingly ignorant of his own guilt and danger, he is totally unprepared, to feel interested in the preachers testimony, concerning the fulness there is in Christ of pardon and salvation, for sinners ready to perish. He sees no excellency in the physician, because he does not feel sick. He sees no need of embracing the Saviour, because he does not feel unable to help himself. Of consequence, the whole scheme of the doctrines of grace appears to him like foolishness, and a stumbling-block. In this way, through his own self-righteousness and self-sufficiency, he resists the light, rejects the counsel of God, and slights a bleeding Saviour, becomes more and more stupid, and more and more guilty; taking the very place of those Jews, of whom Christ said, "If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin. To those who persist in this course, the gospel of Christ is a savor of death unto death.

These ideas are natural and plain in the text. It is, therefore, needless to spend time by dwelling upon them. But there is another idea in the text, which is very important, and which is not so plain. This will claim more particular attention.

We are taught, that ministets of the gospel are unto God a sweet

savor of Christ, both *in* them that are saved, and *in* them that perish.

Many have understood the passage merely to mean, that the faithful services of the gospel minister are acceptable to God, whatever may be his success. It has been paraphrased thus, "We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish." That is, we are careful to discharge our duty to all men, by preaching the way of salvation to them, and by warning them of the danger of sinful courses; and our labors are acceptable to God, whatever effects they may have upon souls. For God, whom we serve, will not judge of us, nor reward us, according to our success, but according to our faithfulness and diligence in his work. God accepteth our labour as to good men, to whom we are instruments of eternal life and salvation; and though others despise the gospel, and refuse to hear the sweet and joyful sound of it, yet, as to them, also, we are a sweet savor to God; for it is not for any neglect in us, as to our duty if any perish; but from their own willingness and perverseness."

Although this exposition conveys a sentiment, which is unquestionably a gospel truth, yet it may be doubted, whether it conveys the full meaning of the passage. That the faithful minister of Christ, will be accepted with God, whatever success may attend his labors; and that God is pleased with a clear and faithful exhibition of divine truth, disconnected from its actual effects upon the hearers, and considered in relation only to the preacher himself, is unquestionably true. But if this were all, which the apostle intended, he certainly chose a very singular method of communicating his idea. And it must be very difficult to see, why he should be so particular as to mention, that they were a sweet savor of Christ *in* them that are *saved* and *in* them that perish. Indeed, in this case, it is not easy to see, what propriety there can be in saying, they were a sweet savor in either the one or the other. For, according to this exposition, their being a sweet savor of Christ, depended merely upon their faithfully preaching the gospel, and not at all on the effect which their preaching produced. Whereas the language of the text, evidently makes it depend entirely upon this effect. Accordingly, in the latter part of the text, the apostle proceeds to tell what that effect was, both upon those who are saved, and upon those who perish. It seems necessary, therefore, to seek a more satisfactory exposition of the passage. In order for this, a clear view of the great and leading design of the mission of Christ, should be obtained. And concerning this, the Scriptures inform us, that his great object in coming into the world, was to glorify God. His own testimony is, I come not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And his will is, that his name may be glorified upon the earth. When God communicates blessings to guilty men, he does it not for their sakes, but for his own great name's sake. And when he sends judgments upon them, he does it, that all men may know that he is the Lord, and that his name may be declared throughout all the earth. It was by doing that, which shall redound to the divine glory, that Christ became an offering and a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to God, when he gave himself up for the sins of the world. Accordingly, Christ a little before his crucifixion, addressing his father, said, I have glorified thee upon the earth, and finished the work, which thou gavest me to do. Nor can it be supposed, that this

will exclusively appear in those who become followers of the Lamb, and are savingly interested in the benefits of redemption. For glory will also redound to God, from the work of redemption, even in relation to those who reject salvation by grace, and finally perish. And as Christ himself was a sacrifice of a sweet savor unto God, because, by making his soul an offering for sin, he did that which shall forever redound to the glory of God ; so, no doubt gospel ministers are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, *in* them that are saved, and *in* them that perish, because by preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, and making known the rich wonders of divine love, and offering salvation in the name of God to the chief of sinners, they do that which, both in relation to them who are saved, and them who perish, shall forever redound to the glory of God.

Let us take a distinct and separate view of the two cases.

1. Concerning those who are saved, the question cannot be hard. All will grant, that God is glorified in their salvation. And as ministers, by preaching the gospel are honored as instruments of securing their salvation, they must of course be instruments of securing that glory to God, of which their salvation is the occasion.

The whole scheme of salvation for sinners, is a display of the riches of divine grace. Man, in his apostate condition, was cast out as a guilty malefactor from the favor of God. He was under sentence of condemnation. He lay justly exposed to the miseries of hell. All the intelligent creation who were acquainted with his state could rationally expect nothing else, than to see him plunged without mercy, into the dreadful gulph. But his offended God had compassion on him. And said, Spare him ; deliver him from going down to the pit ; I have found a ransom. His beloved son stood forth and undertook to atone for the guilty race, and open a way of salvation, through the channel of his own precious blood. He freely gave himself up to death, that those who believe, might have life through him. And the ransom was accepted. It was a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor unto God. When salvation was thus procured, it was also necessary, in order to accomplish the purposes of divine mercy, that this salvation should be preached to lost men ; and that it should be done by those who were themselves once in the same lost condition, but who have now tasted of the redeeming grace of God. This too, was necessary for the same great reason ; that God might be glorified. This reason the apostle states ; that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of men. That it may be seen, that the effects produced by their ministry, must have some higher cause than themselves. To these means God is pleased to add his blessing, and make them effectual to the salvation of those, who once were ready to perish. He convinces them of their sin and ruin. He prepares their mind to receive the message of his love, and embrace the Saviour by a living faith. He freely pardons their sin, and carries forward the work of sanctification in their hearts, by the operations of his holy spirit in applying divine truth. Thus he raises them from the very door of hell, and opens before them the gate of heaven ; and all for the sake of his beloved son. Surely in all this, God must be glorified. In prospect of this, when the Saviour was born, adoring angels shouted for joy, and sung songs of glory to God in the highest. Nor will saints in heaven ever cease to celebrate these matchless wonders of redeeming love. The new song will always

be, "Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God with thy blood." In those who are saved then, God will be forever glorified by the work of redemption. But in their salvation, according to the divine plan, ministers of the gospel, by preaching the precious truths of God's word are made instrumental; and thus are made instrumental in procuring that glory, which redounds to God in this glorious event. On this ground, therefore, the apostle might well say, we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved. But let us,

2. Turn our attention to those who perish, and inquire how ministers of the gospel are also, unto God, a sweet savor of Christ in them. It has already been observed, that God gets to himself a glorious name by executing his judgments on the wicked; and that he will glorify himself from the work of redemption by Jesus Christ, in those who perish, as really as in those who are saved. It is readily seen, however, that he does not directly glorify his mercy and grace in the destruction of sinners, as he does in their salvation. But he glorifies his infinite justice and holiness. And these are as essential to the perfection and glory of the divine character, as his mercy and grace. It is as important too, that one should be glorified, as it is that the other should. But, in order that God may glorify himself by inflicting punishment on the wicked, in view of intelligent spectators, two things are necessary. In the first place, the punishment must be *just*. In the second place, it must *appear* to be just. And that it may thus appear, the wickedness, on account of which it is inflicted must be clearly seen. For if punishment is inflicted, where no wickedness is apparent, the justice of that punishment cannot be seen, and of course, justice cannot be glorified. Hence, the more clearly the wickedness of any guilty creature appears, the more striking must be the justice of his punishment. The faithful preaching of the gospel however, has an evident tendency to render the wickedness of those who finally reject it the more apparent. This may be clearly shown. It is a truth, that mankind as sinners, actually deserved endless punishment antecedently to all consideration of atonement and offers of pardon. If no Saviour had ever bled, and no pardon had ever been offered, God would have been just in the execution of his law upon them. Angels no doubt, would have glorified his justice. Still, however, in that case the full depth of their depravity would not have appeared. It would not have been seen, that they were so exceedingly wicked, as to be ready to reject a Saviour and a free salvation, when mercifully offered. Probably if any one except the Supreme Being had informed the angels, that mankind had become so exceedingly depraved, that even if a Saviour should be provided, and salvation should be freely offered, they would all make light of it, and ungratefully reject it; I say, it is probable angels would have doubted, whether such wickedness were possible. And if mankind, antecedently to the revelation of God's purposes of mercy, had been so informed, probably they too, would have rejected the idea, and with indignation. But now, wherever the gospel is preached, this melancholy truth is confirmed beyond the possibility of a reasonable doubt. The depravity of the human heart, in this, its astonishing greatness clearly appears. Though a divine Saviour who thought it no robbery to be equal with God, condescended to appear in the world, to open a way of recovery to perishing

sinner, yet he sustained while here, the most unmerited abuse, the most shameful sufferings, and the most cruel death. And though pardon and salvation are freely offered through him, yet sinners coldly turn away, refuse the gracious offer, and perish in their sins. And must it not hence appear most clearly, that they perish justly? Will not the glory of divine justice be far more strikingly displayed in their destruction, than it could have been, if salvation had not been thus graciously offered? Surely, in view of this slighted grace, even the mouth of every sinner, himself must be stopped. But ministers of the gospel, who faithfully exhibit divine truth, are instrumental in developing this wickedness of the human heart. They are therefore, instrumental in preparing the way for the justice of God to be glorified, in the destruction of those who perish. As the Saviour himself, was set for the rise and falling again of many in Israel, and for a sign that should be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed; so they, by holding up this glorious Saviour and the way of salvation through him, furnish opportunity to sinners, to act out and display the temper and feelings of their unholy hearts. And in this way, it is a solemn truth, that the unbelieving go great lengths in wickedness, and after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, when his justice shall be glorified in their eternal ruin. Thus ministers are unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that perish.

The following reflections are naturally suggested.

1. This subject may be of use, in helping us to form a correct opinion concerning the best method of preaching. And this is a point, surely, on which no one will doubt, that it is of the highest importance, that our opinions should be correct. It is a subject however, notwithstanding its vast importance, on which mankind have been led away with very different notions. And even professing christians have not always been agreed. They have been too regardless of the plain example of inspired apostles, and the explicit directions of inspired truth. Instead of this infallible standard, they have adopted as a standard, some conceit of their own imagination, to which they desire, that preaching should be conformed. Hence, some have desired that ministers should be exclusively confined to the discussion of moral duties. The doctrines of the gospel must not be mentioned. This is more especially desired respecting the most distinguishing doctrines; such as the depravity of man, the nature of atonement, the necessity of regeneration, and the sovereignty of God. These must be kept entirely out of view, as forming no part of the system of revealed truth; or, at least, as being unworthy to be preached.

Others again, desire that ministers should dwell entirely on the love of God, as it appears, in the bounties of common providence, and in the invitations and promises of his word; still carefully keeping out of view, the distinguishing doctrines of grace; and especially the doctrine of future punishment.

Others again, would have ministers dwell principally on experimental and practical religion. Persons of this class however, generally admit that the doctrines usually denominated *doctrines of grace*, are plainly taught in the bible, and indeed constitute the leading doctrines of the gospel. Yet, they cannot think it profitable to preach them.

They think it would be much better, only to describe the exercise and feelings which are peculiar to the people of God, and inculcate the external duties of the christian life. But from our subject we are ready to conclude, that it would be much more safe for ministers to conform to the example of inspired apostles, rather than to the opinions of any of these. If they desire to be unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish, there is but one way in which they can be certain of doing it. They must preach and enforce the *doctrines* of Christ in the same plain and faithful manner, as did the apostles. They must explain and enforce all those doctrines, which in their connection, tend to unfold the desperate wickedness of the human heart. Because it is only on the ground of this, that the glory of divine grace can be magnified in the forgiveness of those who repent; and it is only on the same ground, that the glory of divine justice can appear in the execution of deserved punishment, on those who remain impenitent. It is evident, that the apostles preached in this manner. So far were they from endeavouring to convince men, that the doctrines of total depravity, atonement for sin, regeneration, and the sovereignty of grace, were either untrue, or if true, of but little importance, or passing lightly over them in any way, that they evidently dwelt much upon them. They preached them as fundamental articles of the gospel system. As to morality, it is evident they knew nothing about it, as being of any value in the sight of God, unless it flowed from an heart in which the love of God was shed abroad by the Holy Ghost. The religion of the gospel, they considered as comprehending a belief in all its cardinal doctrines, and a practice of all true morality. In this scheme, this belief and this practice were inseparably connected.

And as to *God's love*, which is most eminently displayed, in the gift of a Saviour, the work of atonement, the regeneration, pardon, and salvation of sinners, they evidently knew not how to preach it, without insisting on the doctrine of human depravity and guilt. For, in their opinion, the greatness of man's guilt, was the very thing, which magnifies the riches of God's love, in showing mercy. If the dreadful guilt of man could be taken away, the astonishing *love of God* would inevitably go with it. Herein is *love*, not that we loved God; but that he hath loved us, and given his Son to die for our sins. God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The apostles could never forget the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which they esteemed *rich*, just in proportion as our poverty was *great*; because that he, though in himself rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might become rich. It was ever a delightful theme, with them, that mankind are saved by grace through faith, and that not of themselves, but by the gift of God.

And as to *experimental* and *practical* religion, they evidently knew nothing of any such thing, disconnected from the essential truths and doctrines of religion. "This is life eternal," said our Lord in an address to his Father, "that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." But, how are God and Jesus Christ to be known, without an acquaintance with the doctrines of the gospel? Without this, how can we ever know, whether we love the Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ? The idea, that *experimental* and *practical* religion may be consistently preached, while the doctrines

of religion are neglected, is a gross mistake. No such thing is possible. If the doctrines of the gospel are not understood, the glory of God's moral character cannot be seen. And if this is not seen, the greatness of our obligation to love him cannot be felt. Neither will sin appear to us, as it did to the apostle, exceeding sinful. And if sin do not thus appear, and we remain ignorant of the extent of our depravity, we shall never feel the obligation we are under to God, for the gift of his Son; nor to Christ, for shedding his blood. And if the doctrine of atonement is left out of sight, or not understood, all motives to repentance and faith are, at once, annihilated. The same may be shown of all the leading doctrines. Give up the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, future judgment, and eternal retribution, and all foundation of christian hope falls to the ground. All attempt, therefore, to preach experimental and practical religion, without preaching the doctrines of religion, is an attempt to build without a foundation. It is like an attempt to preserve a stream, when the fountain from which it flowed, is utterly destroyed.

2. From this subject we learn, that the faithful preaching of the gospel is attended with important consequences to those who hear. There is reason to apprehend, that many people go to the house of God, where the gospel is faithfully preached, from sabbath to sabbath, without ever duly reflecting, that what they hear must have some effect upon their future and eternal condition. But this subject certainly teaches, that, if it be the gospel which they hear, it *will* be of consequence; it *will* produce in them, some important effect. And here, let it be remembered, the question is not, whether they *believe* it be the gospel, or not. It may *be* the gospel, and they may not believe it. It may *be* the truth as it is in Jesus, and yet they may hear it, with total disbelief. Christ preached the truth, and showed unto men the way of salvation, yet many of *his* hearers could not be persuaded, that such preaching was truth. So the apostles preached the truth; for they were not as many who corrupt the word; yet many of *their* hearers rejected their preaching, as being exceedingly erroneous and dishonorable to God. And, no doubt, a large portion of those, to whom they were a savor of death unto death, disbelieved entirely and sincerely the leading doctrines which they taught. So, now, the gospel may be really and faithfully preached, and yet some may really and sincerely disbelieve it. But whether they disbelieve what is preached or not, if it be the real gospel, it must be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, to their souls. It will either operate as a means of preparing them for heaven, or, of fitting them for a more aggravated condemnation, in a world of woe. For God has said, that his word shall not return unto him void. How happy the consequences of a ministration of the gospel, to those, to whom it becomes a means of conviction, conversion, and sanctification, until they are crowned with victory, and received to glory! On the other hand, how important, and how dreadful the consequences to those, whom it proves the means of hardening in sin, and preparing for a more aggravated final punishment! To the righteous, it must surely appear exceedingly important, when they shall be fully sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the word, and Christ shall present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. And however it may appear to the wicked *now*, they will realize the importance of its consequences to them, when

when they are summoned to the bar of Jesus, through whose mediation and atonement, salvation has been offered, there to give an account of the manner, in which they have treated his calls, his warnings and merciful invitations. When this rejected and slighted Saviour shall bid them *depart*, they will then know and *feel* what is meant by a *savor of death unto death*.

3. We may learn from this subject, that real christians, when in the exercise of grace, can never lightly esteem the preaching of the gospel. Christians *when* they feel, as they ever ought to feel, will always desire to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They are sensible, that *now* they know but in part, and are sanctified but in part, and in all things are imperfect. And they must also desire to know more, and be more conformed to the image of God. They must be sensible, too, that, in this imperfect state, they are liable to fall into hurtful errors, both in faith and practice, which, if they do not finally destroy them, may yet prove very injurious to them, and destroy their peace. How then can they neglect, or lightly esteem so important a means of their increase in knowledge, of their growth in grace, of their spiritual comfort, of their preservation from error, and their perseverance in holiness, as the preaching of the gospel? How can they do otherwise, than desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby? Surely, then, whatever men may profess of attachment to the cause of the Redeemer, if they lightly esteem the preaching of the gospel, if trifling excuses are sufficient to keep them away from the house of God, where the word of truth is plainly declared, they furnish melancholy evidence against themselves, that the word is not unto them, a savor of life unto life. Most certainly, they are destitute of that spirit, which influenced the holy psalmist, when he said, How sweet are thy words unto my taste; yea sweeter than honey to my mouth! My soul breaketh for the longing it hath, unto thy statutes at all times.

4. Our subject teaches us, that it is exceedingly important for those who are favored with the preaching of the gospel, that they so hear, that it may prove a savor of life unto life, and not a savor of death unto death. It is plain, that this does not depend so much upon the preacher, as it does upon the hearers. It is the business of the preacher to make a clear manifestation of the truth. He must see to it, that he preaches the word; not the devices of his own heart; nor the opinions of other fallible men; but the pure, unadulterated word of God. He must not be as many who corrupt the word; but as of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God, so must he speak in Christ. He must preach the things of God, not in words, which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth. He must preach not as pleasing man, but God, who trieth our hearts. And when he has so preached, he must leave the event. He may, indeed, rest assured, that, in so preaching, he is either a savor of life unto life, or a savor of death unto death, to those who hear. But which he shall be, it is not for him to determine. This, so far as it respects men, depends on the improvement, or misimprovement of those who hear. The command of God to his ministers is, "Thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear; For they are most rebellious." If they neglect faithfully to preach the word, to make a clear exhibition, and a solemn application of the truth, then souls may

perish through their unfaithfulness; and they must be accountable for it. Thus runs the divine declaration. "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man; thou shalt surely die, if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way, to turn from it, if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul." That the word preached may profit, that ministers of the gospel may be a savor of life unto life to their people, it is not only necessary, that they faithfully declare all the counsel, but, also, that it be mixed with faith in them who hear. Hence, he who spake as never man spake, said, *Take heed how ye hear.* And this subject most solemnly enforces the admonition. For how dreadful is the thought, that the most clear and faithful manifestation of divine truth, owing to the misimprovement of the hearer, or because he refuses to take warning, may prove a savor of death unto death! How solemn, and, in itself, how painful must be this thought to the gospel minister! How painful the thought, that his tedious labors, designed for the everlasting good of his people, may, nevertheless, be the means of plunging them deeper in everlasting sorrow! How pertinently may he exclaim with the apostle, Who is sufficient for these things? Yet, if he has the testimony of a good conscience, that he faithfully preaches the whole truth, and declares the whole counsel of God, he has this source of consolation, under all his discouragements, that he is unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that perish, as well as in them that are saved. That whatever success may attend his labors, as to those to whom he ministers, yet, in one way, or the other, God will assuredly be glorified. But, to hearers, themselves, how much more solemn and affecting the thought, that what they hear *may* be a savor of death unto death! And how careful, how solicitous, and how importunate in prayer, should they be to him, with whom is the residue of the spirit, that the word preached may profit them, and become a savor of life unto life.

AMOS.

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

The Kingdom of Christ contrasted with Earthly Kingdoms.

Judea, conquered by the Romans, and become a Roman province, was put under the immediate government of Pontius Pilate, who was appointed and styled governor or procurator of Judea, by Tiberius Cæsar the emperor of Rome. The Jews, as a conquered people, not having any lawful authority to put a man to death, proceeded to deliver Jesus to Pilate, pronouncing him a malefactor, and accusing him of treason against Cæsar, or of making himself a king. Pilate, after having entered into the judgment-hall, proceeded with the trial, saying unto Jesus, *Art thou the king of the Jews?* And again, *What hast thou done?* Jesus answered, *My kingdom is not of this world.* A brief account of this trial before Pilate, is contained in *Matthew, Mark and Luke*, but the reply of our Saviour, just quoted, is found only in the Gospel according to *John*. We do not however, on that account, feel

inclined or authorized, to declare this quotation, to be of questionable authority. But we are much more strongly inclined to regard it, as another striking instance, in which the gospel of John is enriched with the most interesting and important information. The reply of our Saviour, commends itself, especially to the disciples of Christ, as being of the highest importance. It is in a peculiar sense our Saviour's *own language*, and as such to be received with the most implicit confidence; whilst at the same time, we are naturally invited to contemplate those collateral evidences or circumstances, which may serve very much to confirm our belief in such a declaration. *Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world.* We shall therefore, in pursuance of our design, proceed, in the first place, to consider some of those properties peculiar to the kingdom of Jesus, which serve to shew that his kingdom is not of this world; and then, in the second place, consider some of those properties possessed by the subjects of this kingdom, which also serve the same great purpose.

I. Some of the properties peculiar to the kingdom of Jesus.

1. The kingdom of Jesus is a *spiritual kingdom*. This will be evident if we only contemplate for a moment, the *person, character, and designs*, of its king, and the *nature of those laws* which he enacts and executes. This king is a *divine person*, and of *heavenly extraction*; whereas the kings of the earth, notwithstanding any superstitious veneration they may have received, are all of earthly origin, and not unfrequently of very inferior note. These kings are sometimes *usurpers*, and not unfrequently owe their elevation to the corrupt will of their fellow beings. In the course of the trial, to which we have just alluded, Pilate understood that Jesus avowed himself to be a king, but he perceived nothing like an intention or effort on the part of Jesus, to usurp the throne of the Cæsars, and he was therefore led to declare himself innocent of Christ's blood. The king Messiah is a *delegated monarch*. He neither assumes of himself, nor usurps the throne which he occupies. *I set my king, saith the Lord, upon my holy hill of Zion.* The spotless purity and perfect rectitude of the life and character of the king Messiah, give him a vast, nay, infinite ascendancy above the wisest and the best of earthly monarchs. The best of earthly kings are frail and imperfect, and not unfrequently degraded in the eyes of the virtuous, by some notorious sin. *He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.* Had Christ been a *mere man*, and of mere earthly extraction, the conclusion is irresistible, (admitting man's apostacy) that he would not, and could not, have been entirely *sinless*. But that which serves more clearly to distinguish the king Messiah from earthly monarchs, and prove his kingdom to be *spiritual*, is a consideration of the great primary *design* which he contemplates and prosecutes, the *means and instruments* which he employs, and the *laws* which he enacts and executes. His great *design* is, in a word, the complete deliverance from sin and death, and the everlasting and perfect happiness, of a rebellious world. For the accomplishment of this purpose, the *means and instruments* employed, and the *laws* enacted, are wholly peculiar, and spiritual, and such as earthly monarchs treat with contempt, as being illy suited to promote the establishment or aggrandizement of earthly kingdoms, although in fact they are made the *power and the wisdom of God* to the pulling down of strong holds, and to the estab-

lishment and prosperity of a more glorious kingdom. Earthly kings pursue no objects, but such as time and observation fully shew to be temporary and fluctuating, and unproductive of permanent good. The page of history, it is true, tells of the mighty operations which have been carried on for the extension and security of trade and commerce ; for the acquisition and preservation of territory ; for the improvement of arts and sciences, and other internal affairs ; in a word, for the acquisition of that national glory, which is so congenial with the spirit of the world. But what does history tell us of another kingdom—the kingdom of Jesus ? Does it not tell of its establishment upon the theatre of time ; and of its wonderful and glorious progress among the children of men, by means and instruments apparently insufficient, but appointed by infinite wisdom, and rendered gloriously effectual. History tells us how different the *laws* of the kingdom of Jesus are, from *human laws*. The laws of Jesus are the laws of infinite wisdom, and consequently they are perfect. The laws of men are the laws of finite and fallen creatures, and consequently, imperfect and mutable, partaking necessarily of the nature and character of those who enact them. The laws of the kingdom of Jesus are exceedingly broad, extending to all the thoughts, intents, desires and purposes of the heart. *Human laws* take cognizance only of overt acts or external conduct ; whereas the laws of Jesus take cognizance of all the motives and incentives of moral action. *Human laws* are calculated only to secure and promote the well-being and prosperity of human society. *Divine laws* are designed and calculated to secure and promote, not only the present, but the everlasting happiness of countless millions of immortal spirits, who shall meet and mingle in the glories beyond the tomb, when time and civil society and civil laws shall be no more.

2. The kingdom of Jesus is a *peaceful kingdom*. According to history the kingdoms of this world, are rarely, if ever, free from commotion within, or war without. A time of comparative peace has ever been the time to prepare for war. Earthly kings are ambitious, vain-glorious, and jealous. The restless ambition, jealousy and rivalry of earthly princes, have kept the world in a constant fluctuation and ferment, ever since the *fall*. Nations as well as individuals, are jealous of every the least infringement of their rights or possessions, and whilst the former hasten to plunge into long and bloody wars, the latter enter greedily into long, expensive and troublesome litigations, to the annoyance and destruction of whole societies. It would be superfluous to point out the various methods in which one individual disturbs the peace of another, and contributes to render civil society a scene of constant fluctuation and conflict. *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.* But in the kingdom of Jesus is *perpetual peace*. This kingdom is founded in perfect and everlasting peace between God and man, and between man and man. Wars, and fightings, and broils cannot possibly originate in the hearts or lives of Christ's loyal subjects, and be prosecuted within the kingdom of Jesus. *Peace I leave with you, says the blessed Saviour, my peace I give unto you ; not as the world giveth, give I unto you.* There may be Achans within, and there will be enemies without, who will endeavour to disturb the peace and prosperity of the church. But they can no more divest the church of her Saviour's legacy, than they can demolish her glorious hopes. They may succeed in curtailing her *external privileges* ; but further than

that they cannot go. For the preservation of these privileges the church employs, and can employ none but *spiritual weapons*. *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal*. Nothing could be more inconsistent with christianity, than for one church to wage war with another, or for the subjects of Christ's kingdom as such, to wage war with the subjects of any earthly kingdom. The subjects of Christ's kingdom, insomuch as they are the subjects of human government, may be justly engaged in defensive war, or that war which is necessarily carried on for the security and preservation of the rights and possessions of human government. It is indeed their misfortune to be so situated, and thus to be required to fight, but it is not, as some suppose, contrary to the precepts of the gospel, or a departure from its spirit. *If my kingdom were of this world*, says our Saviour, *then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews*. Should they fight in this case, which is a *peculiar* one, they would not be actuated by the spirit and temper of the world. And this would not be an instance in which a war was waged immediately by the church upon her enemies, contrary to the will of God, and in the use of *carnal weapons*. The case in which we have supposed the servants of Jesus may fight, is a case of necessity, arising from their connexion with civil government. It is only in a war, originating solely in that government. But notwithstanding some of the servants of Jesus, may thus lawfully be engaged in *civil contests*, yet the kingdom of Jesus itself is, and always will be a *peaceful kingdom*. Those very servants of Jesus, who have thus necessarily become soldiers in the wars of the earth, may at the same time, nay, must be good soldiers of the cross, enjoying internal peace and the comforts of the omnipresent spirit, and displaying the olive branch in the midst of war and bloodshed. Although outwardly the church may feel the iron rod of oppression, yet, within she will experience no influence but that of the mild sceptre of her king. Her subjects, as it respects their internal enjoyment, are secure against all the attacks of heretics, sectarians or the powers of darkness. Her real internal peace is secure and everlasting, and in this respect she differs materially from the kingdoms of this world. A crooked and deceitful *policy* marks the entire course of the kingdoms of this world—a *policy* wholly incompatible with that law of universal love, by which the kingdom of Jesus is ruled. This *policy* justifies a variety of intriguing and clandestine methods of annoying other kingdoms. It will connive at, if not openly sanction, the base and murderous practice of privateering, on the highway of nations. It maintains a horde of spies and inquisitors, who, though apparently indulged in idleness, are plotting the ruin of individuals, cities, and nations. Not so the king Messiah. He seeks and gains no accession of strength or numbers by undue methods, crooked and clandestine measures, and unsanctified means and operations. He adopts none of the compulsory, warlike and imposing measures of the false prophet of Mecca, or the mercenary, oppressive, and inquisitorial practices of the Romish power. He employs none of that variety of means and policy of enslaving the consciences, and paving the way to the ruin of multitudes, which distinguishes the order of *Jesuits*. Christianity constrains no one to obedience, but by love. She leaves every one free to choose or to refuse. Her policy is open, ingenuous, and godlike; a policy that seeks and provides for nothing but the real happiness of enemies, as well as friends. Her law is the law of uni-

versal love and kindness. She asks for no obedience but that which is cheerful and voluntary. She makes no unjust exactions, prosecutes no unwarrantable prohibitions, and sets up no unbecoming distinctions. The interests of the poor and mean man, are as dear to her, as the interests of the rich and noble. She wields no iron rod of oppression. Her sceptre is a mild sceptre. *Justice* shines conspicuous in all her movements, but it is justice tempered with mercy. Whosoever she punishes and chastises, it is always in love, and parental kindness.

3. *The kingdom of Jesus is an everlasting kingdom.*

The kingdoms of this world rise and fall, and become extinct, and almost obliterated from the memory of man. Their kings are mortal. They figure upon the stage awhile, successfully or unsuccessfully, and strait are seen no more. Not so the kingdom of Jesus. This kingdom has from the beginning been a prosperous kingdom. It has suffered, and still suffers no decay. It is indeed constituted of spiritual and imperishable materials. Its king is immortal. He made his appearance in *humanity* it is true, but he was clothed with *divinity*. He is from everlasting to everlasting, and his kingdom is indeed commensurate with his own duration. Had we no other ground of belief that this kingdom will be perpetuated, and finally consummated in glory, we might derive a full belief of it, from the shocks and tempests which it has already endured, in different stages of its progress, and which it has rode out in perfect peace and safety. Gog and Magog can scarcely, at any future time, put this kingdom to a severer trial, than it has already endured. Its king is a victorious king. He rides forth conquering and to conquer. All enemies, and finally the last enemy *death*, shall be subdued and put under his feet. His kingdom is as dear as the apple of his eye, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. And what is remarkable, the reign of this king is distinguished, by that peculiarly *divine economy*, that reaches and preserves the meanest, as well as noblest of his subjects. Said Christ, *This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing.* The economy of earthly kings is extremely imperfect, and never such as to insure the perpetuity of their kingdoms. Splendid, indeed, is the court of the king Messiah, but far different from the pomp and show, and vain glory, and useless expenditure of the kingdoms and kings of the earth. Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, saw in his dream, and behold a great image, and the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom, said Daniel, shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

(To be concluded.)

FROM THE UTICA CHRISTIAN REPOSITORY.

NEW DENOMINATION.

There have been, in all ages, different denominations of religionists. We have long been accustomed to hear of Calvinists, and Arminians, and Antinomians, and Unitarians, and Universalists, and a great variety of other names, intended to designate those who embrace schemes of religion differing more or less from each other. And we have heard of *Nothingarians*, who are supposed to embrace no religious system whatever. But there is a class of men, who are becoming very numerous at the present day, who have, I think, no appropriate designation. They are not, indeed, found by themselves, as a distinct community, but are intermingled with other communities. Their principles, however, and their practices, are such as clearly entitle them to a distinct name. And their being intermingled with other communities is no objection to this. For we hear of Calvinistic Episcopalians, Calvinistic Presbyterians, Calvinistic Congregationalists, Calvinistic Baptists, and so also of Arminian Episcopalians, Arminian Presbyterians, Arminian Congregationalists, and Arminian Baptists. It is a great convenience to have a name, if one can be found sufficiently expressive of the thing, since it saves much circumlocution. And no one is ever ashamed of his name, unless he is ashamed of the thing which that name expresses. And as this class, of which I am speaking, are already very numerous, and are rapidly extending their influence, and bid fair I think, to be the prevailing denomination, which, at no distant day, may swallow up all others, I think it is high time they had a distinct name. And as no term occurs to me more expressive of their true character, or more descriptive of their principles and practice, I would take the liberty of proposing, until some better name is suggested, that they be called *Anythingarians*.

In the early part of my life I met occasionally with some of this class, and not fully understanding their principles, I sometimes wondered at their conversation and conduct. But further acquaintance with men and things has explained it all. I once resided for a considerable time in a populous place, where there were several churches, the ministers of which frequently interchanged their labours, and where also travelling preachers frequently stopped and spent a sabbath. Of course, there was a great variety in the preaching, both as to style, manner, and talent, and as to the sentiments which were inculcated. A certain class, of hearers, however, were always pleased. Let the preacher be whom he might, if he only spoke fluently and gracefully, and let the sentiments of his discourse be what they might, this class of hearers were always gratified. I could never come out of the place of worship, and walk the length of a street in their company, without hearing them exclaim, "What an excellent sermon! What a fine preacher!" And I often had to cross the street, or hurry along with a haste scarcely decent, to avoid the usual interrogatory, "Don't you think it was an excellent sermon?" This class of people, I conclude were *Anythingarians*.

Happening once in a strange place, I inquired something about their preacher, and the reply was, "Oh, he is one of the best of preachers; every body is pleased with him. Before he came among us there were many different parties, each having their own peculiar views, and

keeping up separate meetings : Now, *all* are united. Calvinists and Arminians, Presbyterians and Episcopalians, Baptists and Methodists, and Quakers, all go to hear him, and all are equally well pleased ; and the congregation increases rapidly." I thought he must be a rare kind of character to be entitled to such a commendation as this. But a few more year's acquaintance with the world has corrected my error, and convinced me that this character is not so rare as I then imagined. It is not yet, however, quite clear to my mind whether he was an Anythingarian or a Nothingarian, though my opinion inclines to the former. Most of his hearers were without doubt, Anythingarians.

I have known some men of such a happy versatility of genius, that they could so accommodate themselves to those with whom they happened to be, and so enter into all their views and feelings, as to seem, for the time to be just like them. Like the chameleon, they always assumed the colour of those objects to which they were nearest. With Calvinists, they would seem to talk in favor of the doctrines of grace ; and with Arminians, they would seem to be opposed to those doctrines, and in favor of the opposite views. With Episcopalians, they would speak well of the church, and seem to have no aversion to forms of prayer, and confirmation, and ordination by Bishops. With Presbyterians, they would seem to prefer the Presbyterian order and government ; and with Congregationalists, they would seem to be well pleased with their system. With Baptists, they would express a high opinion of the purity and orthodoxy of their churches, seem almost willing to *go into the water*, and appear to approve of every thing but their close communion, and not blame them for that. With Methodists, they would talk fluently of their *good feelings*, exhort in their meetings, say *amen* to their prayers, encourage women to speak in public, and exhort awakened sinners to *press forward*. With Quakers, they would say *thee* and *thou*, and talk of the *light* within. And with all, they would expatiate on the evils of a sectarian spirit, and enlarge in the praises of charity and liberal sentiments in religion. I have been sometimes greatly puzzled to account for such apparent changes, from one thing to its opposite, made in so short a time, and with so much facility. But I think I have found out the secret. These men were Anythingarians.

Besides the foregoing traits of character, which distinguish those of this denomination, I have taken notice of some others which I will mention.

When a man, in all companies, abounds in religious small talk, but carefully avoids saying any thing that has much point, or is very decided any way, I set him down as an Anythingarian.

When a man professes to think well of two opposite schemes of religion, and declares that he likes them both, and sees no important difference between them ; or when two books, written on opposite sides of the same question, are presented to him, and after examination he declares that he admires them both, and thinks they are equally good ; I set him down as an Anythinarian.

When a man acknowledges the truth as the instrument of the conversion and sanctification of men, and at the same time embraces in his fellowship those who understandingly hate and oppose the truth, I set him down as an Anythingarian.

When a man professes to believe that holiness consists in disinterest-

ed benevolence, and that every selfish experience is a false experience, and yet embraces in his fellowship those who openly avow that their religion is wholly selfish, and those who publicly ridicule the idea of disinterested benevolence as chimerical and impossible, I set him down as an Anythingarian.

When two men of opposite principles go and converse with a third person for the purpose of ascertaining what his principles are, and each comes away with the impression that he agrees with him, I set down that third person as an Anythingarian.

When a man professes to believe the doctrines of the bible to be true, and acknowledges that they are plainly and abundantly taught in the scriptures, and at the same time considers the preaching of them as unprofitable and useless, if not positively injurious, and so converses with the opposers of those doctrines that they consider him as much opposed as they are, I set down that man as an Anythingarian.

When a man professes to believe the doctrines of the bible to be true, and declares that he is willing to have them preached, but is always in a tremor when he hears any of them mentioned from the pulpit, for fear they should be carried *too far*, I set him down as an Anythingarian.

When a man professes to believe the doctrines of the bible to be true, and declares that he understands them, and is edified with them, but is afraid of having them preached, lest *other people* should not understand them and be edified, I set him down as an Anythingarian.

When a man flatters me to my face, and speaks highly of me to my particular friends, but talks against me to my enemies, and elsewhere throws out sly hints to my disadvantage, I set him down as an Anythingarian.

When a man tells me that he agrees with me in my opinions, and admires my method of stating and vindicating them, and wishes he was only able to do it as well, and at the same time is very intimate with those who oppose my principles, and encourages all their efforts to bring those principles into disrepute, I set down that man as an Anythingarian.

When a church has a confession of faith, and require all whom they receive as members to give their public assent to it, and at the same time do not carefully examine applicants to know whether they understand and believe the doctrines contained in that confession, or knowingly receive such as do not believe those doctrines, or retain, without any effort at discipline, those members who openly oppose the doctrines to which they have solemnly assented, I set down that church as a body of Anythingarians.

When a church has a covenant, by which all the members have solemnly bound themselves to walk *with that church* in all the ordinances of the gospel, and yet suffer their members to *walk away* whenever and wherever they please, I think that church must be deeply tinctured with Anythingarianism.

I might mention other traits, which distinguish this denomination from all others, and give them a claim to a distinct title; but these few hints will enable every reader to supply others from his own observation. And I intended to say something of the great advantages of belonging to this denomination; in which, however, I must be brief.

As I have observed already, I think this denomination bids fair to be

the prevailing denomination, and to swallow up all others. And every one must be sensible of the great advantage of belonging to that denomination which is the most numerous and powerful, and has the most extended influence. If a man belongs to a small body, he might almost as well stand alone. He cannot derive much help from his associates, and, whatever his talents may be, he is easily borne down by the resistless current of popular opinion. He cannot hope to gain any distinguished elevation in the world, and must be content to live and die in obscurity. But if he belongs to a great body, of extensive power and influence, he can hope, through their assistance, to rise to eminence. And all the power and influence and character of that body may be considered as in some sense his own, since he is one of them. And in proportion as he is zealously devoted to the honor and interests of that body, he may expect they will have an eye to his honor and interest : and as he contributes to the advancement of his associates, he may expect them also to contribute to his. Every one must see, therefore, the great advantage of belonging to this denomination, as it regards his prospects of rising in the world.

The private professor, who adopts Anythingarian sentiments, possesses one great advantage over those of any other denomination. He can more easily establish and maintain the reputation of uncommon and distinguished piety ; and especially with those whose acquaintance with him is but superficial. By making this his object, and keeping it steadily in view, and becoming "all things to all men," in the sense and to the extent which his principles teach ; by abounding in religious small talk, and being careful in mixed companies to say nothing of a decided character ; by studying the principles and feelings of those with whom he converses, and carefully accommodating himself to their views and prejudices, so as to make them pleased with themselves, and think he is pleased with them ; by appearing to agree with them in those things which they regard as most important, and not very strenuous in those things in which he differs from them ; by appearing to embrace them cordially in his fellowship, and to think quite as favorably of their religious character and sentiments as of his own ; by pursuing this method, he may render himself very agreeable to all sorts of people, and gain the reputation of having an uncommon share of good feeling, and of being an eminent example of piety, charity and catholicism. And if any whose acquaintance is more intimate, should ever suggest a doubt whether he is not the best man in the world, it will be at once interpreted to the disadvantage of him who makes the suggestion, and it would be better for him to hold his peace, or join in the general commendation.

The minister who adopts Anythingarian sentiments, will find it much easier to get along in the world. If he has only common talents, he can soon become a great man. If he becomes "all things to all men," in the sense which these sentiments teach, he must needs be very popular. And as to his preaching, that, of course, will be accommodated to the taste of his hearers. If they are Anythingarians too, it will be very easy to please them. And if it should happen that a part of them are decided and rigid in their adherence to orthodox sentiments, he can so temper his discourses as to introduce many orthodox terms, which will make them think he is correct in his sentiments ; and in private he can

so converse with them as to render that impression deeper ; while, by only introducing orthodox terms, and never explaining them, or if he should think some professed explanations necessary, by giving very general ones, which every hearer may interpret according to his own views, he will never offend those who are not orthodox. They will even be quite willing to hear the orthodox doctrines so preached. In this manner he will gain the esteem and confidence of all classes, and thus secure to himself a good name for keeping people together and building up society ; and what is of some consequence too, he will secure a comfortable support to himself and family, and not be exposed, as the rigidly orthodox minister frequently is, to be driven about from place to place, an object of pity and scorn. And if the young preacher who adopts Anythingarian sentiments does not readily find a good vacancy in which to settle himself comfortably, perhaps, by putting his sentiments in practice, he can *make* one. Let him look out for some place which has an older minister of orthodox sentiments, and where there is some religious excitement. He can easily get recommended as a useful assistant at such a time. And when he is introduced, as he can scarcely fail of being, let him visit from house to house, and attend meetings, with great diligence and zeal. Let him carefully study the views and feelings of the various sorts of people, and accommodate himself to every one, according to the distinguishing principles of his sect. Let him now and then drop a hint, where he thinks it will do, that he is better acquainted with the management of a revival than their minister is ; and let him often tell in public, how *many* revivals he has seen, and how *well* he understands them. Let him direct all his efforts to produce a general excitement of feeling, and to raise it to the highest pitch ; and just at this crisis, let him privately urge the minister to preach the doctrine of election, as the best means at this moment, to produce a powerful effect, and greatly promote the work ; and tell him how it has been done to great advantage by this, that, and the other minister, during great revivals in their societies. As an orthodox man he may be very probably inclined to do it ; and if he should not, advantage can be afterwards taken of his neglecting to follow this good advice. But if he should, the point desired will most probably be gained. A violent opposition will be excited on the part of the impenitent whose attention is so far roused as to make them feel and hate the truth. And by a little management some of the church members may probably be induced to join in that opposition. Now let the young preacher, in conversation with all such, speak much of the danger of having that doctrine preached at such a time, as being likely to discourage sinners, grieve the Spirit, and stop the revival ; and let him lament that the minister should be so imprudent, at such a critical time, and express his fears that the revival will stop. By the opposition and confusion which may be thus created, it is not unlikely that the excitement may be greatly diminished, and finally cease, and the minister be charged with destroying the revival. And it is quite likely that all this may occasion his dismissal, and make way for the settlement of the young man in his place. Or if he should happen to get so far involved in the difficulty as to have no prospect of obtaining the place for himself, he may obtain it for some friend, who has been doing the same good turn for him elsewhere.

In short, the advantages to be obtained by adopting Anythingarian

sentiments are so many and so great, and at the same time so obvious to persons of any acquaintance with the world, that there cannot remain a doubt, I should think, but that this denomination must increase, and be the prevailing denomination. And young men who wish to rise in the world must make up their minds to join it, or give up their hopes of distinction, and be content to live and die in obscurity.

D. D.

ON THE MULTIPLICATION OF LITERARY INSTITUTIONS.

The multiplication of Literary Institutions is dreaded by some, as being, in their view, unfavorable to the substantial progress of our national literature. But for ourselves we can say, that it seems to us no inauspicious omen. We hail it as the token of a spirit in this community that will not rest, till it has brought within the reach of every enterprising youth the means of a liberal education. We see in it the process by which the standard of education is to be raised to its maximum, while the expenses of education are to be brought down to their minimum,—a process as simple as it is rapid, and involving only the well known principle that competition always leads to improvement. That such anticipations are not visionary, the history of Literary Institutions in our country abundantly testifies. While the number of Colleges in New England has been increasing, the advantages, which they have individually afforded have been continually rising in value and diminishing in expense. The recent experience of this community, and the facts which are at this day exposed to the observation of every individual, may serve at once to illustrate and to prove the assertion, that if a new institution be placed where it becomes in any sort a rival with an old one, the friends of both are immediately excited to far higher exertions than could have been otherwise called forth in behalf of either. Students must be obtained; and to secure them, each institution must aim at combining, as far as possible, the highest advantages with the least and fewest expenses. This principle of competition, co-operating with the spirit which has been diffused over the public by the efforts of Education Societies, has brought about in several of our Colleges and Academies, within a few years past, the establishment of very respectable foundations for the support of indigent students.—If we suppose this spirit of competition, and the spirit of improvement which it begets, to operate a few years longer; and if we suppose at the same time, that spirit of Christian patriotism, which has been inspired by the efforts of this and kindred Societies, to increase in power and in the extent of its diffusion, it will be no visionary expectation to anticipate the day, when it shall be *here* as it is in Scotland, where every man of common industry, where even a poor widow, by a little extraordinary exertion, may train up a son to rank in attainments, in influence, in usefulness, with the richest and proudest in the land. And when such privileges of education shall be enjoyed in every district of our territory, there will be no more difficulty in supplying a well instructed ministry for all our population.

Ninth Annual Report of Am. Ed. Soc.

LETTER FROM THE REV. PLINY FISK,

MISSIONARY IN PALESTINE,

*To one of the Editors of the New-York Observer.**Beyroot, June 10, 1824.*

MY DEAR SIR,

Though I am removed far from my native country, yet I feel a lively interest in the accounts I receive from time to time, of what is going on there. The measures that are adopted, the questions that are agitated, the subjects that are discussed, all interest me, and often the more in consequence of my absence, and my acquaintance with foreigners. Reading our periodical publications with men of other countries, has often led me to take new views of the character, customs, government and religion of my countrymen. I have read with mingled emotions an article in No. 16 of your paper, extracted from the *Richmond Evangelical and Literary Magazine*, on the intellectual character of our clergy. The perusal of this article has led me to wish that a subject of such importance to the churches at home and to missions abroad, might be presented to the public in a different light. I have neither the time nor the ability to do, what I wish some one would do in this respect. But I wish to present a few hints for the consideration of yourself and your readers.

Need I say that nothing is farther from my heart than the wish to diminish the efforts that are making to improve "the intellectual character of our clergy?" If such a remark be necessary, I make it with the utmost sincerity. But I could wish that the impression might be made more fully and more practically on the minds of all who are concerned in preparing young men for the ministry, that it is eminent holiness rather than highly cultivated intellect, which God has honoured and still honours with success in his service.

It is said, in favour of teaching young men literature and the sciences preparatory to the ministry, that the apostles themselves were trained, three years at least, in the school of Christ, before they received their last commission. True, but what sort of training was that? What did they learn in the school of Christ? grammar, rhetoric, logic, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy or the fine arts? Was not their time spent rather in a practical study of religion, in learning humility, self-denial, patience, zeal, faith and love, in learning to pray, and preach and suffer? What does this prove then, if not that moral, religious, spiritual culture, training and discipline are the proper preparatives for the christian ministry?

The same thing is forcibly taught in what Paul has said about the qualifications for the sacred office: "A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous, not a novice, not self-willed, not soon angry, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate, holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Now what impression is all this calculated to make on

the mind, unless it be this, that Paul's great anxiety was, that the men who were introduced into the ministry should be, not men who had read attentively the Greek classics, or studied the different philosophical systems of the age, or become acquainted with the whole circle of human learning, but men whose hearts had been renewed by the Holy Spirit, and whose character and habits had been formed to practical godliness and holy living; men who had made more than ordinary attainments in Christian experience, and were thus "able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of God." Really then it does seem to me that the question, when we contemplate the prospects of the church, is not, how many well educated ministers are there? but, how many *evangelical* ministers are there? Not how many who have received the honours of a college, but how many who have received the spirit of Christ? Not how many are able "to conduct a class of grammar boys through Cæsar's Commentaries," or through Homer's Iliad, but how many are able and disposed faithfully to warn the wicked, guide the inquiring and comfort the afflicted?

Permit me here to ask whether the American Education Societies have not, in this respect, fallen into a dangerous mistake? In estimating the number of competent ministers, the question has been decided by the degree of education and intellectual culture possessed by the individual; and, consequently, Arminians with all their frigid formality, and Arians and Socinians with all their infidelity, have been enumerated as competent ministers, while many, very many unlearned men who know the truth as it is in Jesus, and preach it faithfully and successfully, though perhaps awkwardly, are rejected as unworthy to be enumerated among the ministers of Christ. Would Paul have made a classification of ministers on this principle? Had he been called to make a classification and report the number of competent ministers, or to examine candidates for the ministry, what questions would he have asked? "Is the man learned?" or "Is he holy." "Is he eloquent?" or "Is he blameless?" "Is he a persevering student and man of cultivated taste?" or "Does he hold fast the faithful word?" "Has he a classical style?" or "Is he *not* greedy of filthy lucre?"—"Does he know Algebra?" or "Is he a lover of hospitality?" "Can he calculate an eclipse?" or "Can he govern his own house well?" If an Education Society wishes to inform the public how many ministers there are in the country, who have had a liberal education, let them do so. But if they wish to let the public know how many ministers there are who possess the essential and indispensable qualifications for the work, let them judge of characters and qualifications by the principles and precepts of the Gospel. Since leaving America I have had frequent opportunity to converse with English Christians, and the subject of conversation has often been the religious prospects of our respective countries. A pious churchman tells me with the liveliest joy, not that unprecedented efforts are making to improve 'the intellectual character of their clergy,' but that the number of evangelical ministers is rapidly increasing both in the established church and among dissenters. All the English Christians with whom I have conversed, have made their classification of the clergy on this principle, and their question has been, "How many ministers are there who truly preach the gospel?"

I have neither the time nor the books requisite for a particular examination of Ecclesiastical History, in reference to this subject. The results of a thorough and *impartial* investigation would not fail to be interesting. We should be glad to know how far learned and how far unlearned men were employed in maintaining and propagating evangelical truth during the three first centuries,—among the Waldenses and Albigenses, and in England and on the continent, at the time of the Reformation and at subsequent periods, and in spreading the Gospel among Pagans in more modern times. The results of such an investigation would probably show us that learning, when truly consecrated to the cause of truth, has been rendered a great blessing to the church. But unless I greatly mistake, we should see at the same time that “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise : and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.” We should say, as the result, that the success of the ministry depends, not on the degree of learning, but on the degree of faithfulness and zeal, which is brought to the work. The great body of Moravian, of Baptist and Methodist missionaries have gone into the field unlearned men. But when or where has the church ever seen better soldiers or more glorious successes.

For my own part I shall consider the prospects of usefulness for our ministers and missionaries as brightened just in proportion as I see an increase of evangelical holiness and well-directed zeal, and that too whether the time of preparatory study be prolonged or shortened, and whether the standard of classical learning be elevated or depressed. If the churches do not guard well against the *pride of human learning*, they have reason to fear that God will give them some awful lessons on the subject, that he may “stain the pride of all glory, and bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.” Facts have shown and continue to show abundantly, that “the world by wisdom knows not God ;” a man must be taught to know him “not with wisdom of words,” but “by the foolishness of preaching.” Every time I turn my thoughts to the present system of education in its different branches, I feel fully persuaded that as the millennium approaches and the world is prepared for its commencement, there will be a great change in the whole system of education. Youth will be treated more as if they were moral and immortal beings, will be educated with a more direct reference to the conscience and the heart ; with a view to give them correct principles of action, rather than mere speculative notions, for the purpose of making them good rather than great.

Americans generally are in no danger of thinking too highly of foreign nations and foreign institutions, in comparison with their own. Yet, if I do not mistake, they often do this, in particular cases, to answer some special purpose. A circular was once prepared for an Education Society, in which the writer stated, that no christian country on earth was so destitute of religious instructors, as the United States. He was led to this conclusion by comparing the number of Ecclesiastics in America, and in other countries. But he ought to have known that, in most foreign countries, the great body of those who are called Ecclesiastics, have no title whatever to be called religious instructors, being neither able nor disposed to teach. The author of the article which I mentioned at the beginning of my letter, seems to think that the clergy of the United States, “for literary and scientific acquire-

ments, classical taste, and intellectual force," will not bear a comparison with the clergy of other countries, nor with men of other professions in our own country.

In regard to the first point, I presume a careful examination of facts would show that the education possessed by our clergy, is, (if I may use the terms,) not so monarchical or aristocratical, but more republican and democratic. What I mean is this. We have not a particular class or select company of clergymen, who have carried learning to so high a pitch, or risen so much above the level even of the literati, or produced works so much distinguished for classical taste, scientific learning, or critical acumen and research, as the learned bodies of Oxford, Cambridge, and Edinburgh, and the German critics; but we have a larger body of respectably educated men, who diligently employ their learning for the promotion of truth, holiness, and the salvation of men. We have not so much learning concentrated in the few, but we have more dispersed among the many. We have not so many Popes, Patriarchs, Cardinals and Archbishops, but we have more sound divines, able preachers, and diligent pastors. We have not two Universities, containing twenty Colleges each, like Oxford and Cambridge, but we have, what is much better for our country, this number of Colleges dispersed in the different states. In the English universities, the man of genius and the diligent student, may make higher attainments than fall to the lot of graduates from our Colleges, but the course of study is so free, that one is *obliged* to learn almost nothing. The student is not called on daily by his instructor, to answer questions about the lectures he has heard, or the lessons he has read. There are indeed examinations, but there are many ways of avoiding them, or of getting through them, with a very superficial knowledge of the subjects. And if it sometimes happens in America, that "a boy is considered as ripe for College, who would not be allowed a place on the fourth form in an English grammar school," it happens quite as often, that a young gentleman receives the honors of Cambridge or Oxford, who would not be admitted to the Freshman class in a New England College.

There is an aristocracy of learning in the church of England, which produces great men; but the great body of the clergy are not probably more learned than the Congregational and Presbyterian ministers of the United States, and in theology and the composition of sermons, to borrow an expression from Robert Hall, "they might very well be sent to school to the ministers of New England." The education of the dissenting ministers in England, is certainly much inferior to that of our clergy. The length of time spent in preparatory studies, is generally about three years. The Baptists and Methodists have a few men among their ministers, who are more learned than any in the same denominations in America, but I know not whether this can be said of the great body of their preachers. I have reason to believe that the number of illiterate preachers, is comparatively as great in England as in the United States.

Here I wish to institute a comparison of a different kind. In what country is there most learning, among those who are, not merely in name but in fact, ministers of Christ? For what have we to do to blend and confound the preachers of the true gospel, with those who preach another gospel, or no gospel at all; with those who have the form of

godliness, but deny the power thereof; with those who deny the Lord that bought them? In this point of view, the churches of America have great cause for thanksgiving. Let a man who loves the truth as it is in Jesus, and puts a just estimate on human learning, make the tour of the Colleges and Theological institutions of America, and form an intimate acquaintance with the presidents and professors as well as the students, and then let him visit the Universities of Europe, and decide where there is most learning truly devoted "to Christ and the church." When I speak with my christian friends from Europe, about so many presidents and professors whom we esteem as *converted* men, who are friends to religious revivals, and active in promoting them, they hear with surprise, for these are things they have very seldom seen or heard, and scarcely dared to hope for it in their own Universities.

After all, the subject should be considered by itself, and not comparatively. The question should not be, whether the clergy of the United states are more learned than the clergy of other countries: nor whether they are as learned as it is desirable that they should be, for it is admitted that an increase of learning among them is devoutly to be desired. But the question is, whether there is such an alarming deficiency in the intellectual character of the clergy, that, all circumstances considered, this is the great ground of complaint, of censure, of lamentation, or of fear and "deep solicitude." Is this *the thing* that requires the alarm to be sounded, and the friends of Christ's cause to resolve that they will "not cease to present their views to the public, while they can raise a voice or wield a pen?" Is not the standard of literary attainments rising, and rising rapidly too among the clergy? Is there not reason to fear that a great part of them are making much more rapid improvement in intellectual than in *Christian* character? And is not this a circumstance that ought to cause alarm and "deep solicitude" to every true friend of the church in America; and to call forth the most vigorous efforts to improve the *Christian* "character of the profession?" As public opinion now is in America, which are most likely to acquire extensive influence, and thus do extensive mischief, to poison the sources of public opinion and liberal learning, and thus send out deadly streams into all the land? the men who go out and preach the gospel while they know little or nothing else? or the men who, though learned in all the wisdom of the age, attempt to preach a gospel which they do not understand, and whose power they never felt in their hearts? In what way do those who are called ministers, most frequently dishonor their profession, grieve the children of God, and occasion reproach or contempt among the men of the world? Is it by defect of intellect or of learning? Is it not rather by an inordinate zeal in studies that do not belong to their profession, by avarice and love of the world, by meddling with political affairs, by bickerings and strifes and petty disputes among themselves, by irregularities in their families, by want of zeal and activity in their appropriate work?

The author of the article in the Magazine, alludes to the well known fact that, by many young men "the idea of getting a college education is taken up comparatively late in life. In some revival of religion they have been brought to a knowledge of divine truths, and are strongly inclined to devote their lives to the ministry." Now does the writer mean to intimate that such men ought not to go into

the ministry, because "the foundation of good scholarship" has not "been laid in the grammar school?" Would he not then have excluded from the work a *very* large proportion of the best men now in the ministry, and nearly all the missionaries that America has sent to the heathen, and I may add almost the whole body of the ministers and missionaries of the English Independents, Baptists and Methodists and of the Moravians; in a word nearly all who have gone into the ministry for the sake of preaching the Gospel, thus leaving the sacred office, as it is in national establishments, in the hands of men who were devoted to the ministry in childhood, educated and instructed into it, whether renewed by the grace of God or not? On whom is the church to rely principally for soldiers in the great enterprise of converting the nations? On those who may be converted out of the small number who are destined from childhood to obtain a college education, or on those who are converted in the wonderful revivals, with which our country is blessed, and consequently forsake their shops and their farms, their "ships," and their "nets," to go and preach the word of God? Here I might ask too, whether some advantages may not be expected, and whether these advantages do not actually result from spending a part of one's early life in manual labours? A vast majority of those who enter the ministry in America are to have the care of congregations that consist principally of farmers, and it is desirable that they should have some practical knowledge of their customs, feelings, prejudices and partialities. Hence it seldom appears that a minister, who has had a city education, proves acceptable and useful in a country congregation. I have known more ministers who have impeded their usefulness by their ignorance of the common concerns of life, and of the customs and situation of their people, than by their ignorance of "Cæsar's Commentaries." The habits of industry, order, temperance and economy, which are formed while under paternal government, and preparing to support themselves by their own labour, are of great use to country ministers and missionaries, and I presume not at all injurious to ministers in my situation.

I have prolonged these desultory remarks much farther than I at first intended. I hope they will do no harm. I would gladly hope they may have some influence in producing, what I have no doubt will sooner or later be produced, a higher comparative estimate of *Christian* qualifications for the ministry, and of *Christian* education and less proportionate attention to what is merely intellectual. Wishing that your editorial labours may serve to promote truth and holiness,

I am, dear Sir, truly your's,

P. FISK.

FROM THE BOSTON RECORDER.

ON PAROCHIAL FINANCES.

"When men consecrate themselves," says Dr. Mason, "to the religious weal of a people, and do, by that act, forego the opportunities open to all others, of providing for themselves and their families, a complete competence is the least remuneration which they have a

right to claim. It is the dictate of common sense, common justice, and common humanity. It is also the express commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ. But, notwithstanding these considerations, the ministry is little better than a starving profession. Not one man in twenty, were he compelled to live on the salary allowed him by his congregation, could escape from beggary and rags. The certain effect is, on the one hand, to deter young men of respectable talent from the ministry altogether; and on the other, to discourage, depress, and finally to ruin those who are in it already.

That degree of talent which fits one, so far as intellectual endowments go, for a useful minister of the Gospel, is much rarer than many seem to imagine; and, humanly speaking, has its temporal prosperity in its own power. When other pursuits invite by the promise of not only a maintenance, but of gain, and even of opulence, it is idle, it is unreasonable, to hope that youth of talents, without fortune, whatever be their piety, will serve the church of God at the expense of devoting themselves to infallible penury, and all the wretchedness which belongs to it. They may desire, they may wish; and, in some instances, from that simplicity which never calculates, or which flatters itself that something favourable "will turn up," they may venture: but in general, they must turn away with a sigh from the employment, which, of all others, their hearts most long after. Let us not hear of self-denial, spiritual-mindedness, and an heroic indifference to worldly things, as characteristic of the true minister of Christ. Self-denial does not mean starving. The spirituality of the father will not stop the cravings of his children when they cry for food; nor is there any heroism in preferring tatters and a hovel to decent clothing and lodging, when they may be had. It is very convenient, no doubt, for men who are adding house to house, field to field, thousand to thousand, to harangue, in a religious stile, on the necessity of a minister's imitating his Master, "who had not where to lay his head;" when the practical inference from all this is in favour of their own pockets. They are wonderfully concerned for spirituality and self-denial to be practised by their minister; but as to their *own* share of these virtues; as to *their* parting with a pittance of *their* pelf to render him comfortable—why, that is another affair. It is one of the most wicked forms of hypocrisy to plead for the cultivation of a minister's heavenly-mindedness, by way of an apology for cheating him out of his bread. The sin of the neglect complained of, is not equally gross in all. In some, it proceeds from thoughtlessness; in others from incapacity to make a right estimate; but in most, it is the fruit of downright covetousness. There has been on this subject, an absurd squeamishness in those whom the Lord has authorised to "live by the Gospel." They have borne and forborne; they have submitted to every species of sacrifice rather than disoblige their people; and their only reward has been an accumulation of injuries and cold-blooded contempt. It is time for them to claim their due in a modest, but manly tone; and throw the fearful responsibility of expelling an enlightened ministry from the church, upon those who are able but not willing to support it honourably. We say an enlightened ministry. For we have no conception that niggardly provision will soon strip her of every thing in the shape of a minister. You cannot place the pecuniary recompense so low, as that it shall not be an object for some body. Fix your

salaries at fifty dollars a year, and you shall not want candidates. But then they will be *fifty-dollar-men*. All genius, all learning, all high character, all capacity for extensive usefulness, will be swept away; and rudeness, ignorance, impudence, and vulgarity, will become the religious directors of the nation. The man is blind who does not see matters fast hastening to this issue in the United States.

"In the mean time, such ministers as are better qualified for their stations, are not only decreasing in proportion to their population, but, with few exceptions, are prohibited from cultivating the powers which they possess. Remote from literary society; without libraries; without leisure to use what books they have; distracted with anxiety for their immediate subsistence; doomed to the plough or some other secular business, to keep themselves fed and clothed; their intellect becomes enfeebled; their acquisitions are dissipated; their ministry grows barren; their people indifferent, and the solid interests of Christianity are gradually, but effectually undermined. Let the churches be warned. They have long slept on the edge of a precipice; the ground is caving in below them; and still they are not aware. Not a place of any importance is to be filled without the utmost difficulty. The search must be made from Dan to Beersheba; often, very often, unsuccessfully; and when successful, it is only enriching one church by the robbery of another. The population of our country is increasing with unexampled rapidity; very incompetent means are used to furnish an efficient ministry; and the people themselves are throwing the most fatal discouragement in the way. All denominations seem to be engaged in a practical conspiracy to starve Christianity out of the land. Let them tremble at their deeds; let their loins be loosed, and their knees smite together, at the bare possibility that they **MAY SUCCEED.**"

FROM THE CHRISTIAN GAZETTE.

ISLES OF SHOALS.

The Isles of Shoals consist of seven small islands, about 9 miles S. S. E. from Portsmouth, N. H. The inhabitants of these islands are chiefly dependant on fishing for a scanty livelihood, and are extremely ignorant. So little curiosity is manifested by some of them, that we have seen an aged woman living on one of these islands, who, we were assured, had never once left the island, not even to visit Portsmouth, although the town is within sight of her house.

From the report of the society for promoting religious instruction among the people of these islands, extracts of which appear in the Boston Telegraph, it seems that during the year ending Sept. 30, 1824, Miss Hannah Peabody has been constantly employed there, chiefly, in instructing the children.

"On the sabbath, she has frequently read to several of the people collected in a little circle, such religious discourses as were calculated to do them good. Religious tracts, also, have been circulated among such as are able to read, and in conversation with the different families, exertions have been made by the young lady above mentioned, to im-

press upon their minds the importance and sacredness of religious truth. The people seem not insensible to the value of religious instruction, as is apparent from the fact, that, with all their poverty, (for with two or three exceptions they are very poor,) they subscribed \$53, on condition that a missionary might be employed among them six of the twelve ensuing months. Accordingly, the Rev. Samuel Sewall was engaged by the directors, and entered on his labors Sept. 25."

Having in former years been witness to the almost savage ignorance, and squalid misery of these poor islanders, we rejoice to find that better prospects are opened upon them. Their degraded condition has too long indeed been a reproach to the christian community, from whom a few miles only separate them. Being on the subject of these isles, we will relate an anecdote connected with them, which was familiar to us in days past.

A number of persons, chiefly of the humbler walks of life, in the town of Portsmouth, were accustomed to meet statedly for the purpose of discussing moral and religious subjects. At one of these meetings, which were always conducted with decorum, and indeed with solemnity, the subject before them was Charity—wherein it consists—what are its proper objects, &c. Several of the members gave their opinions. It coming to the turn of one of them to speak—an elderly, plain, hard working man; he arose and spoke thus: "What my brethren have said about charity is all very well. For my part I shall add nothing more than this; here is neighbor Thompson who sits by my side, and who is obliged to come to town every day from the Isle of Shoals, where he belongs, to sell his fish. He is an honest man and a poor man, and is in want of a great coat to cover him this hard winter, and here are my two dollars towards buying him one." His worthy brethren took the hint, and Thompson, by this practical explanation, was enabled to prosecute his daily voyage, clad in a comfortable garment.

From the Boston Recorder.

STRANGE KINDNESS.

A few days since, on my return from a distant part of the State of N——, I called at a public house, where I was made acquainted with the following event.—A very sprightly and promising child being brought to the table where we were sitting at breakfast, the landlady as she received it sighed and remarked; "Come here you poor little creature." She then turned to the company, and apparently by way of explanation, observed, "The mother of this child was buried but a fortnight ago." On being asked what was the occasion of her death, she related as follows: "Returning from an *assembly* a few months ago, late in the evening, she took a violent cold, which threw her into the quick consumption. Before her marriage, she was viewed as one of the most accomplished females, and as one who enjoyed the most enviable prospects of any in the whole village of——. It was repeatedly stated by her physician, that at the time she was taken ill, which was but a few months after the birth of this, her only child,

there was not to his knowledge a female in town who enjoyed apparently, such perfect health."

On being asked whether she was pious, and whether she enjoyed in her last moments, that hope which is an anchor to the soul? She replied, "Oh no, she knew nothing of her danger till she was actually dying. Her grandmother, by whom she had been brought up, placed her affections so much upon her, that she could never deny her any favor or indulgence that she might crave. When she was taken ill, and exhibited every mark of being in a decline, her grandmother could not bear that a syllable should be said to her on the subject of a preparation for death, because her physician thought it might prevent the favorable operation of medicine; and she was never told that her case was considered dangerous, till she was told by her physician that she was already dying. While she was well, she was gay and vain, and seemed to have but few thoughts of a serious nature, and while she was sick, serious conversation was cautiously kept out of her hearing." I observed, then her friends are not religious, are they? You can judge, Sir, of my astonishment when she replied, "Both her mother and grandmother are professors of religion, and belong to Mr. —'s church. She had other friends who are thought to be pious, some of whom went with the determination to converse faithfully with her, but were dissuaded by those who were immediately about her. Her distress of mind, when she came to be told that she was near her end, was very great, but she continued only a few hours."

Now Sir, how can we reconcile a course of conduct like this, with an honest belief that the soul is immortal, and that its welfare for eternity depends on its repenting and embracing the Saviour in the present life?

JUVENILE WITNESS.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.—Matt. xxi. 16.

At Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, (in the third century) a child named *Cyril*, showed uncommon fortitude. He called on the name of Jesus Christ continually; nor could threats or blows prevent him from openly avowing Christianity. Several children of the same age, persecuted him; and his own father, with the applause of many persons for his zeal in support of paganism, drove him out of his house. The judge ordered him to be brought before him, and said, "My child, I will pardon your faults, and your father shall receive you again. It is in your power to enjoy your father's estate, provided you are wise and take care of your own interest." "I rejoice to bear your reproaches," replied the child: "God will receive me. I am not sorry that I am expelled out of our house. I shall have a better mansion. I fear not death, because it will introduce me into a better life." Divine grace having enabled him to witness this good confession, he was ordered to be bound, and led as it were to execution. The judge had given secret orders to bring him back again, hoping that the sight of the fire might overcome his resolution. *Cyril* remained inflexible. The humanity

of the judge induced him still to continue his remonstrances. "Your fire and your sword," said the young martyr, "are insignificant. I go to a better house! I go to more excellent riches! Despatch me presently, that I may enjoy them! The spectators wept through compassion. "You should rather rejoice," said he, "in conducting me to punishment! You know not what a city I am going to inhabit, nor what is my hope! Thus he went to death, and was the admiration of the whole city.—*Milner's Church History.*

THE CLERGYMAN AND THE LAWYER.

A young clergyman of the Presbyterian denomination, having settled at the south, among a gay and fashionable people, was much admired for his talents. His person and attainments were also the objects of their enthusiastic admiration. All they hated, were his Master and his message! Once, on a very splendid matrimonial occasion, he was called to officiate. The company convened and awaited his arrival. In the mean time the conversation turned on the character and doctrine of their clergyman. They all said he was a good man, a smart man, an acquisition to the place—but, his doctrine, alas! how strict, how hard, how mysterious, how inflexible, how almost audaciously defended and applied! One of the guests, a flippant and well educated young man and a practitioner of law, signalized himself to the high satisfaction of the circle, upon the subject: and in fine was deputed to entertain the audience, after the arrival of the clergyman and the performance of the ceremony, with a discussion, the object of which would be to refute his Calvinistic sentiments. The clergyman arrived—and the time for the colloquy. The lawyer adduced very politely and tritely, his objections—especially against the doctrine of election. The clergyman explained and advanced the arguments in support of the doctrine. The company were all attention and wished their champion to reply. He hesitated, and at last said, by way of terminating the friendly disputation,—“Well, after all, I am not convinced; and to tell you the truth, Sir, if I believed as you do, I should necessarily infer the absurdity of doing any thing, and should never make one effort toward salvation.” Rejoined the clergyman, “Well, but believing what you do, how many efforts do you make?” This was an *ad hominem* thrust which himself had provoked, and for which he was not prepared. The company saw his discomfiture and sympathized in his defeat; for his own conscience told him, as his actions told others, that he never made any efforts upon any principle to attain eternal life, but was living in those habits of levity and dissipation, which utterly indisposed him to all religion.—*Monitor.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been received from Heman; J. W.; S. C.; F. S.; A. H.; & S. which will be admitted. A continuance of the poetical favors of S. is respectfully solicited. Several pieces have been received from Philos and others, which are under consideration. We thank Heman for his intimation, that we may hear from him again.

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

ADDRESS TO THE NEW-YEAR.

Hail Stranger !—who from realms of light
 To earth's probationers dost come,
 Concealing, 'neath thy mantle white
 A tablet for the day of doom.

Say,—who beneath thy brow benign
 Can trace the mysteries of thy way ?—
 Who from the smile of morn, divine
 What clouds may dim departing day ?

Perchance, the oppressor's sway shall cease,—
 Crush'd nations from the dust arise,
 And Mercy bid the bow of peace
 Illume the heathen's darken'd skies,—

Or warriors meet in fields of blood,—
 While Pity pours incessant tears,
 Ere thou upon oblivion's flood
 Shalt join the waste of buried years.

Ah !—thou wilt snatch the mortal breath
 From lips where vernal roses blow,
 And point the unerring shaft of death
 'Gainst breasts that now with gladness glow.

Yes !—thou hast power to rend the heart,—
 To wield affliction's dreaded rod,
 To bid the bands of being part,
 And shuddering spirits meet their God.

Thou writ'st !—On some the lines bestow
 To be in earth's enjoyments blest.
 On some, the seal of hopeless woe.—
 On some, an angel's radiant vest.

Shew me my name.—Thou turn'st away !—
 Stands it with death's devoted throng ?—
 Methinks thy lips reproving say
 "The secret things to God belong."

'Tis well.—And who could more desire
 Than with confiding love to trust
 His spirit to the Eternal Sire,
 While Earth, kind mother, guards his dust.

S.